

HIB - FAQs

Since the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights in September 2011, parents have voiced some very important questions. We hope that the frequently-asked-questions below will help everyone to have a more concrete, comprehensive understanding of how this recent change in legislation impacts parents and students.

Why don't administrators tell me anything about the incident when they make the initial call?

In the past, investigations were typically completed, or partially completed, before parent phone calls were made, to determine precisely what occurred. With the new legislation, administrators are required to contact parents before the investigation has been completed—preventing the relay of specific, accurate information to parents until the process has completed.

Why does the process take so long?

The state of New Jersey has given school districts a very specific timeline to follow regarding the investigation of incidents that may be harassment, intimidation or bullying. After receiving a report from the building principal, the anti-bullying specialist has ten school days in which to conduct their investigation. Once the investigation is completed and submitted to the building principal, it is then submitted to the Superintendent for review. The Superintendent is required to review cases, anonymously, with the Board of Education, before a final decision can be processed and parent notification is completed.

Are parents present during a student interview?

Anti-bullying specialists and principals conduct student interviews regarding a multitude of activities and incidents going on in school buildings each day. Parents are not involved in these interviews, but are updated on the content of these conversations as the investigation is concluded.

What happens when my child is labeled a "bully" as a result of an investigation?

At no point in time are children labeled "bullies." The purpose of the Harassment, Intimidation and/or Bullying (HIB) investigation is to determine if a student violated the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights. Although it may be determined that a child has violated this law, it in no way labels the child.

What are the consequences for students who have violated the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights?

Consequences and intervention strategies that result from an investigation are highly variable and highly individualized. Consequences and intervention strategies may include, but are not limited to, parent conferences, loss of privileges, school detentions, counseling, class lessons, etc. There is no pre-determined consequence for any child involved in a violation of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights. All consequences are developmentally appropriate and take into consideration the whole child.

How will this affect my child's school record if HIB incident is substantiated?

HIB Investigations are completely confidential and no record of the investigation is kept in a student's file. The school principal or anti-bullying specialist may keep a file of past investigations for state reporting purposes, but student names are not made public in any way.